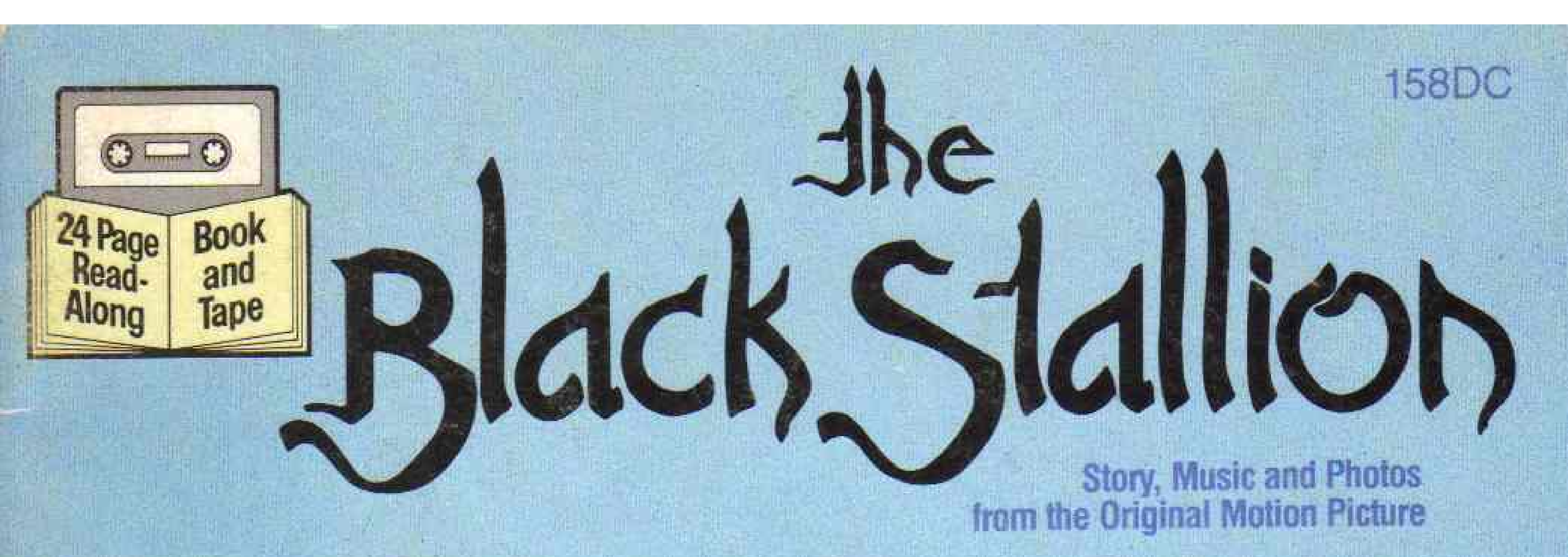
158DC



The Black Stallion

Story, Music and Photos
from the Original Motion Picture

The Black Stallion

This is the story of the **Black Stallion.** You can read along with me in your book. You will know it is time to turn the page when you hear the chimes ring like this...

LET'S BEGIN NOW:

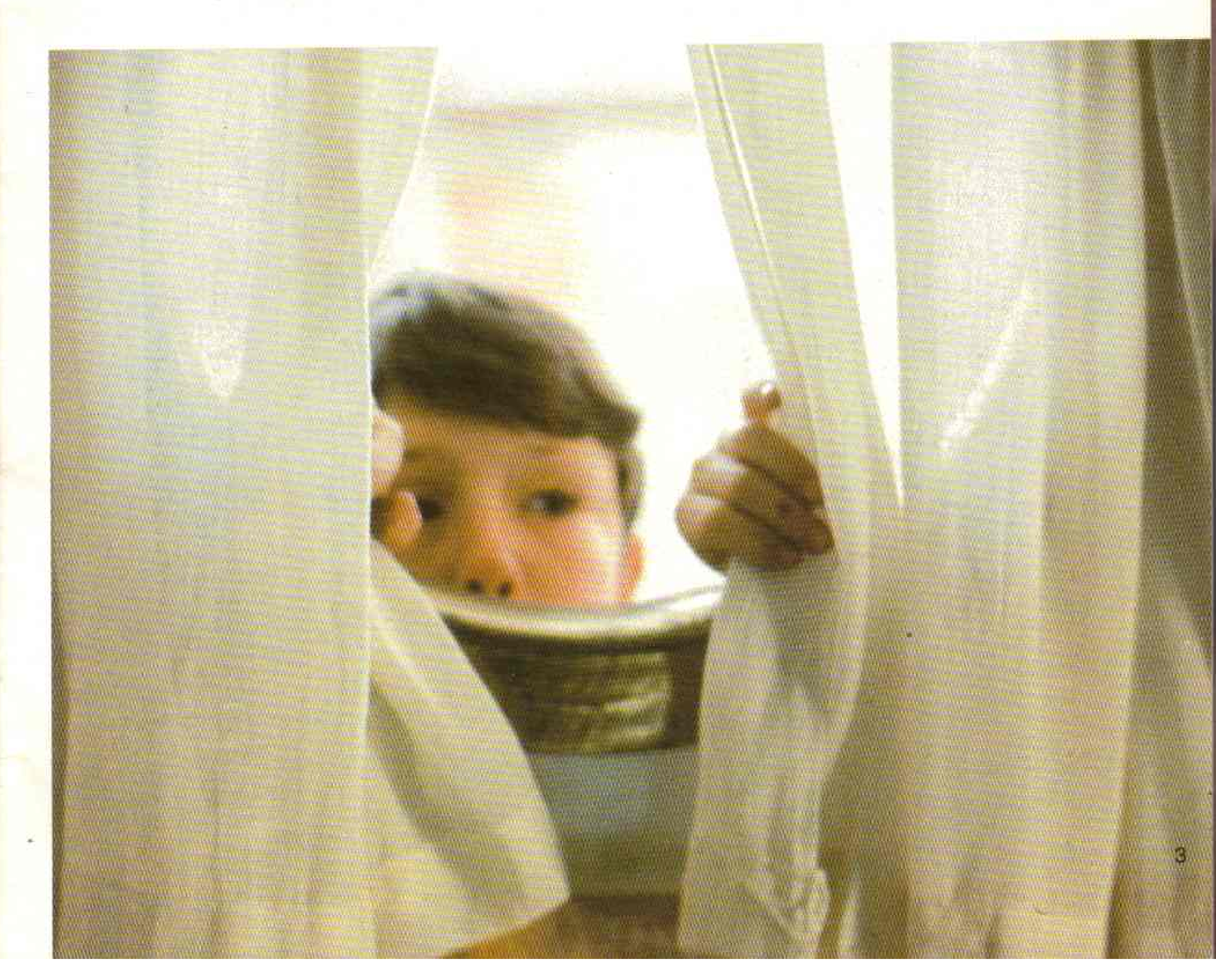
Alec Ramsey had thought a sea voyage to visit his uncle in India would be a terrific adventure. Was he wrong! "No one to talk to but grownups and nothing to look at but water. Boy, I wish something exciting would happen." Alec got his wish the day the ship stopped at a tiny Arabian port.





A black stallion was brought aboard, as strong and fierce as a desert storm. Alec loved horses and watched, fascinated, as the proud stallion fought against the men holding him. He felt sorry for the valiant animal. "A beautiful horse like that should be running free, not locked in a tiny cabin."

Alec couldn't stay away from the horse's stall. Every day he'd bring sugar cubes for the wild stallion and talk to him through the porthole. "I don't know your name, so I guess I'll call you Black. You probably don't think you have a friend in the world. But I'm your friend, honest."

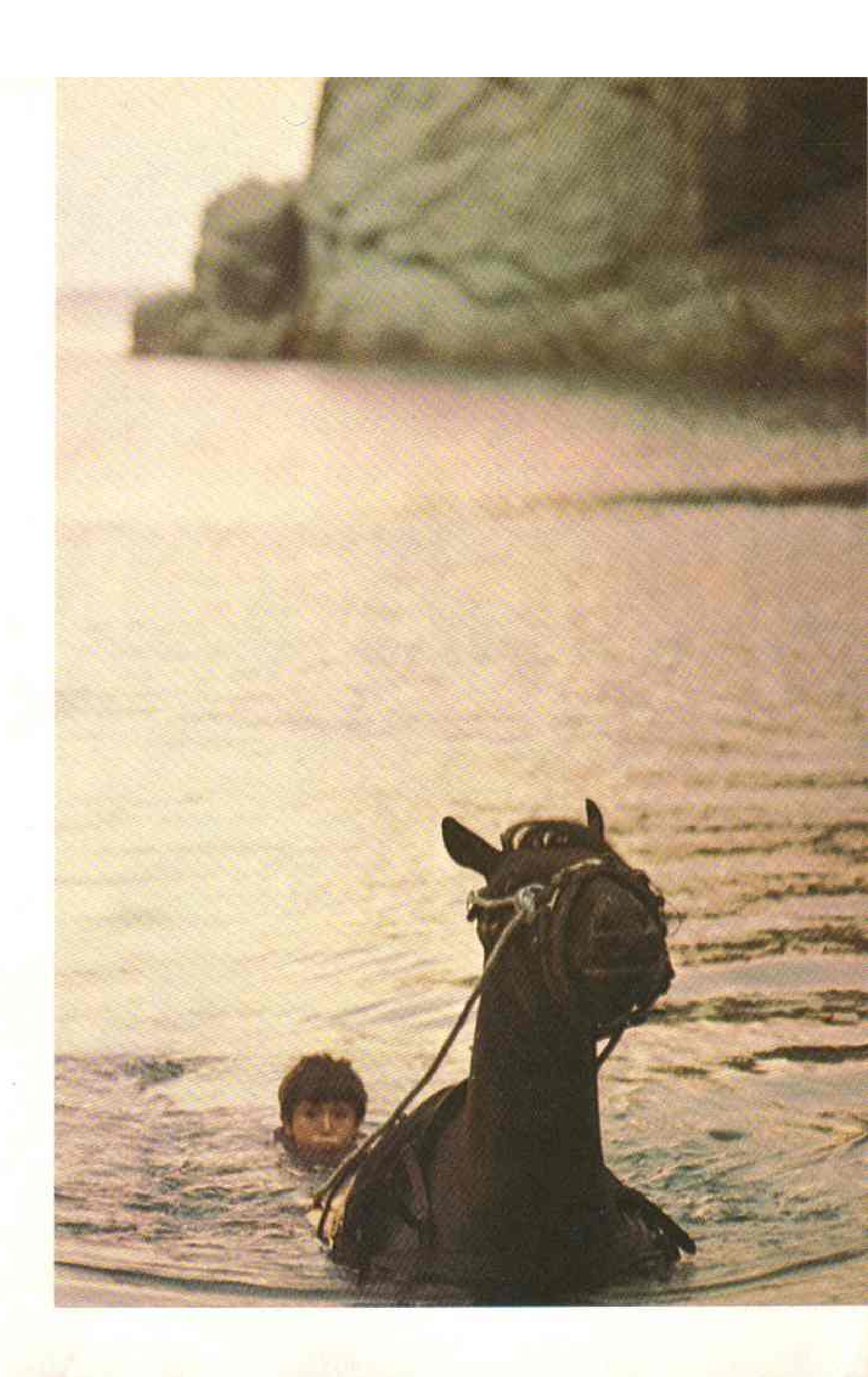




Late one night Alec awoke to shouts and the smell of smoke. The ship was sinking! "The Stallion! If someone doesn't let him out, he'll drown!"

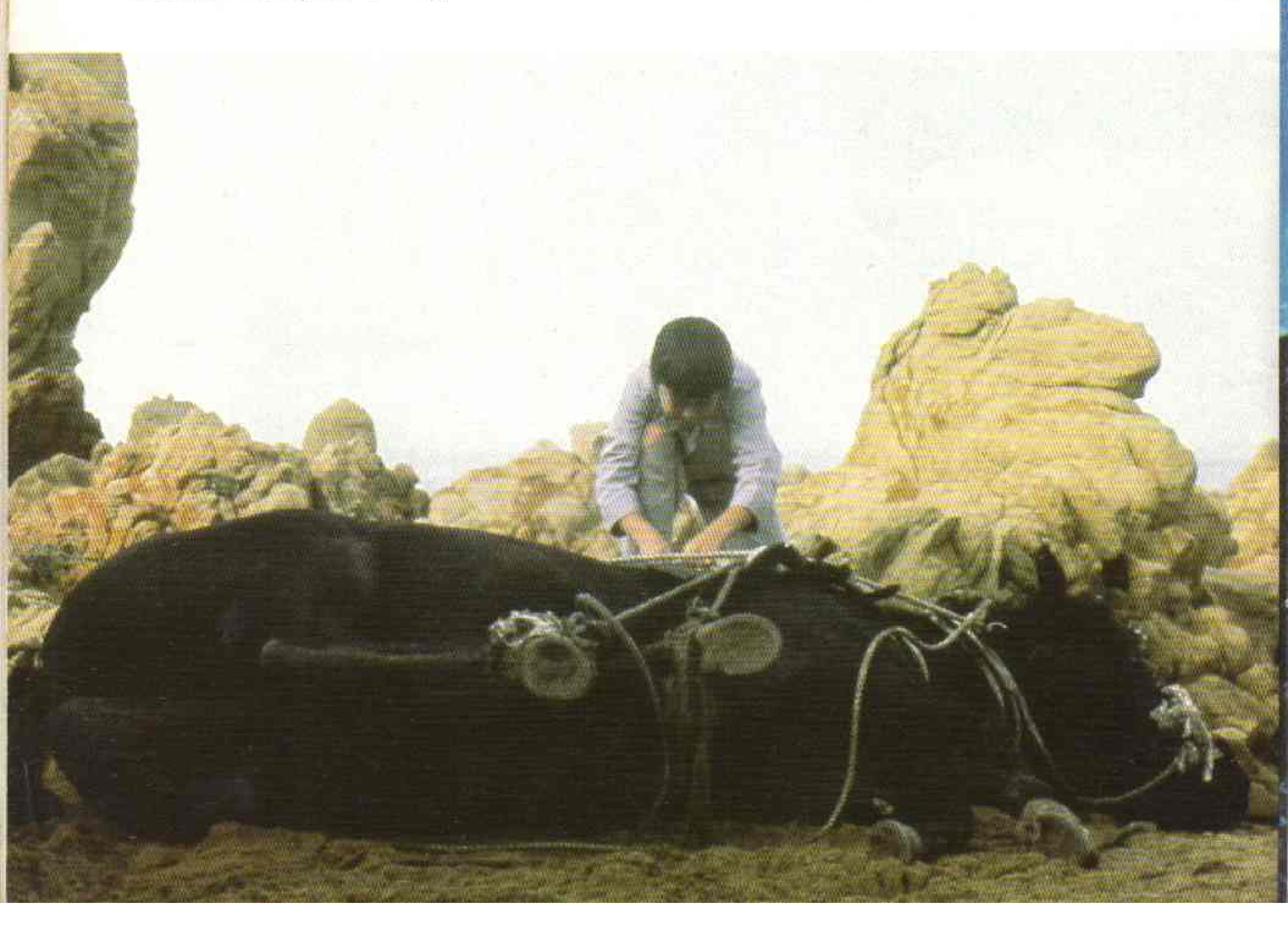
Alec ran to the stall door and threw it open. The powerful horse rushed out and leaped overboard, knocking Alec into the cold sea. Gasping for air, Alec grabbed at the Stallion's harness as the horse began swimming away into the dark night.

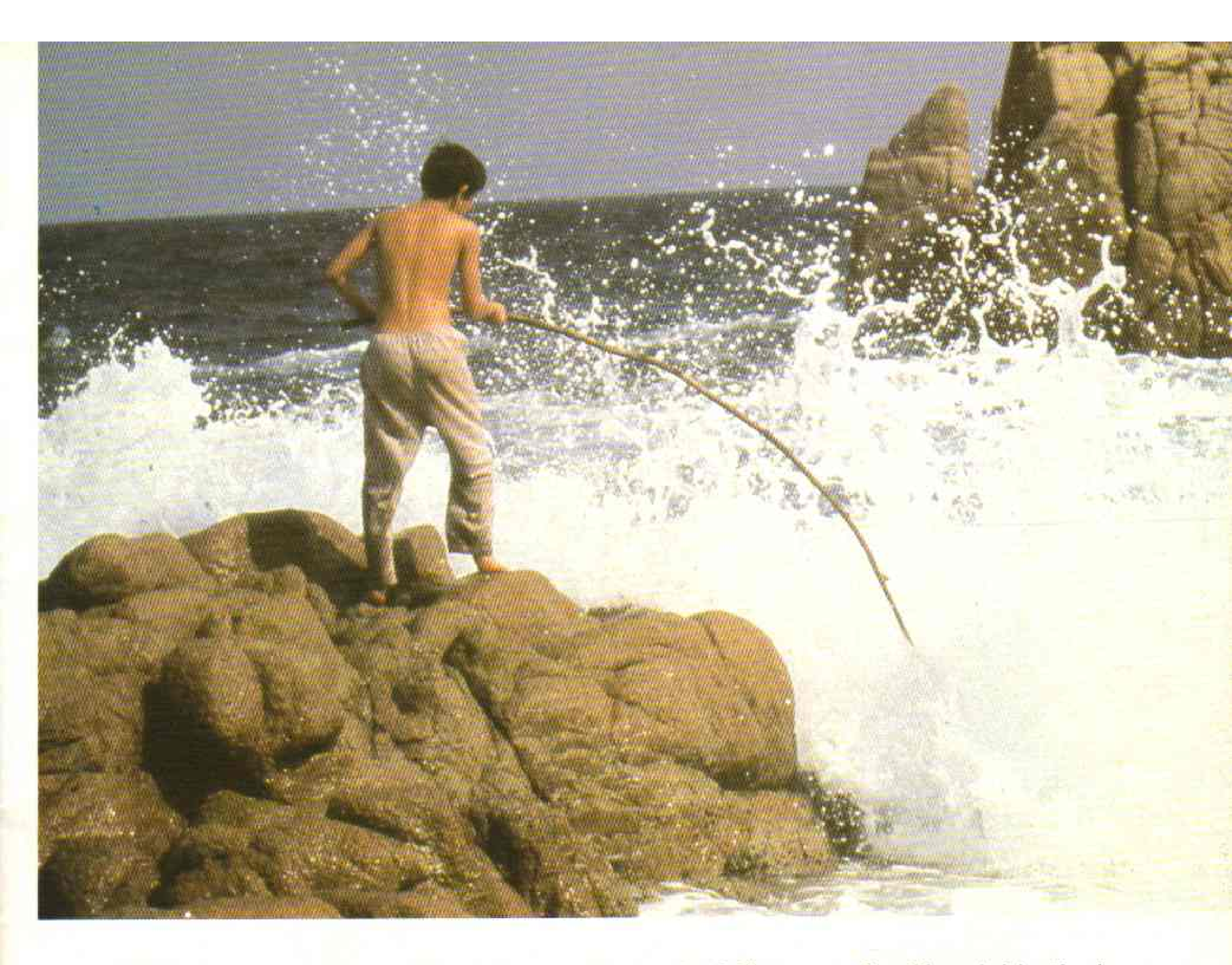
All night long, Alec clung to the Black Stallion. Then, in the first dawn light, Alec saw land ahead —a tiny desert island! The Stallion pulled him right up onto the beach, then galloped away. "He must have known this island was here, somehow. Gosh, he saved my life!"



Totally alone, with nothing to his name but his pajamas and a jack knife, Alec decided to look for his only friend, the Black Stallion. Not far off he heard a terrible commotion. It was the Stallion, helplessly tangled in his harness. "I've got to free him or he'll die."

Slowly Alec edged closer to the panicky horse. "Black, hey! It's me. I want to help." Alec dodged close enough to cut the ropes. The Stallion leaped away, free at last.





If Alec was to survive long, he knew he'd have to find food. He tied his jack knife onto a long pole and tried spearing fish. He discovered that he could eat berries and even seaweed.

After what seemed like hours rubbing two sticks together, he made a fire. "I'd better keep this going day and night. I don't want to have to go through *that* again."

One day Alec woke from a nap in the hot sun, and there, only a foot away, was a deadly cobra. The snake reared up and hissed at him. Alec didn't dare move an inch.

Then a pair of hooves flashed down, crushing the cobra into the sand. It was the Stallion! As the horse dashed away, Alec gazed after him. "He saved me again. I've got to make friends with him, I've just *got* to."

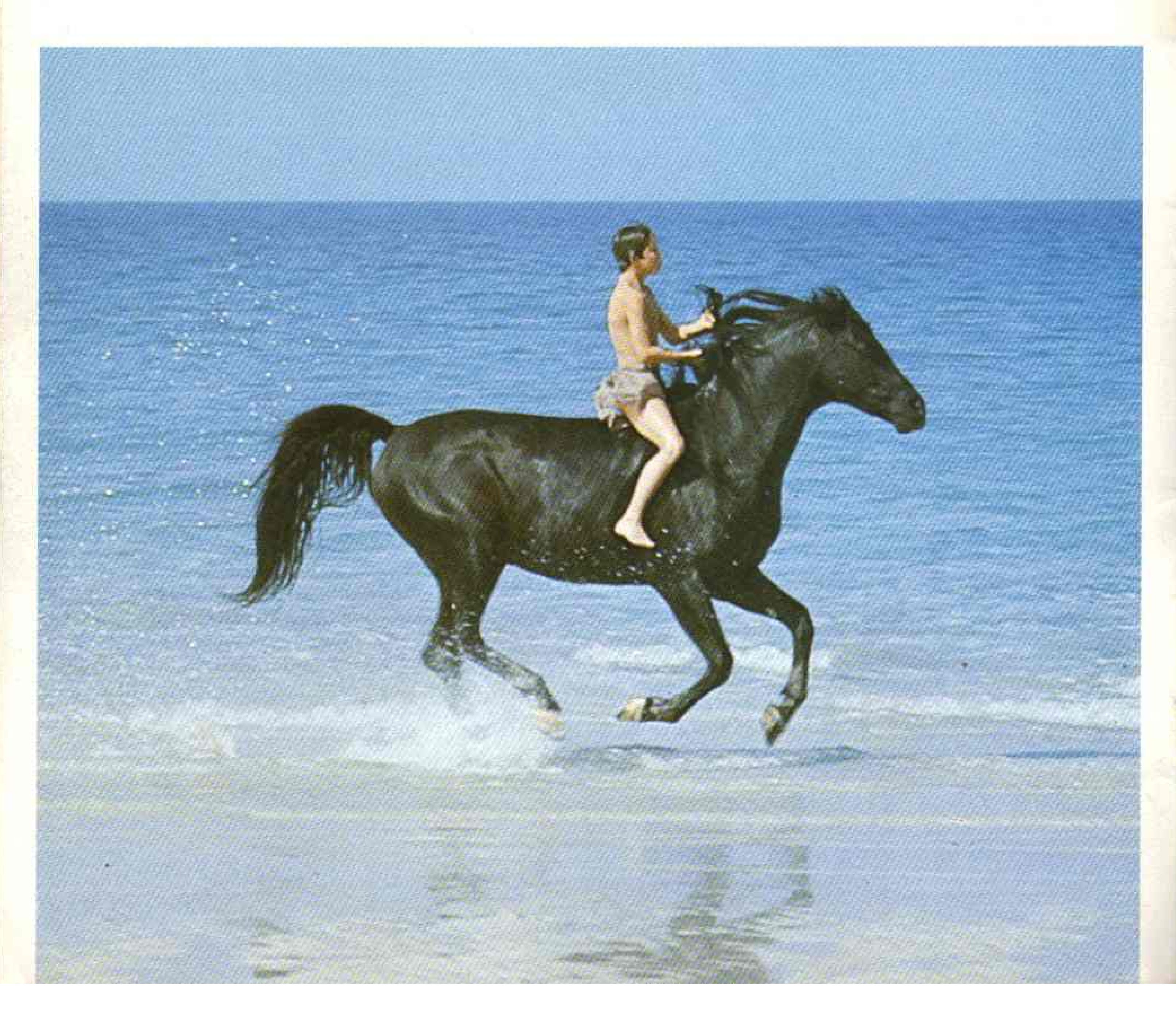


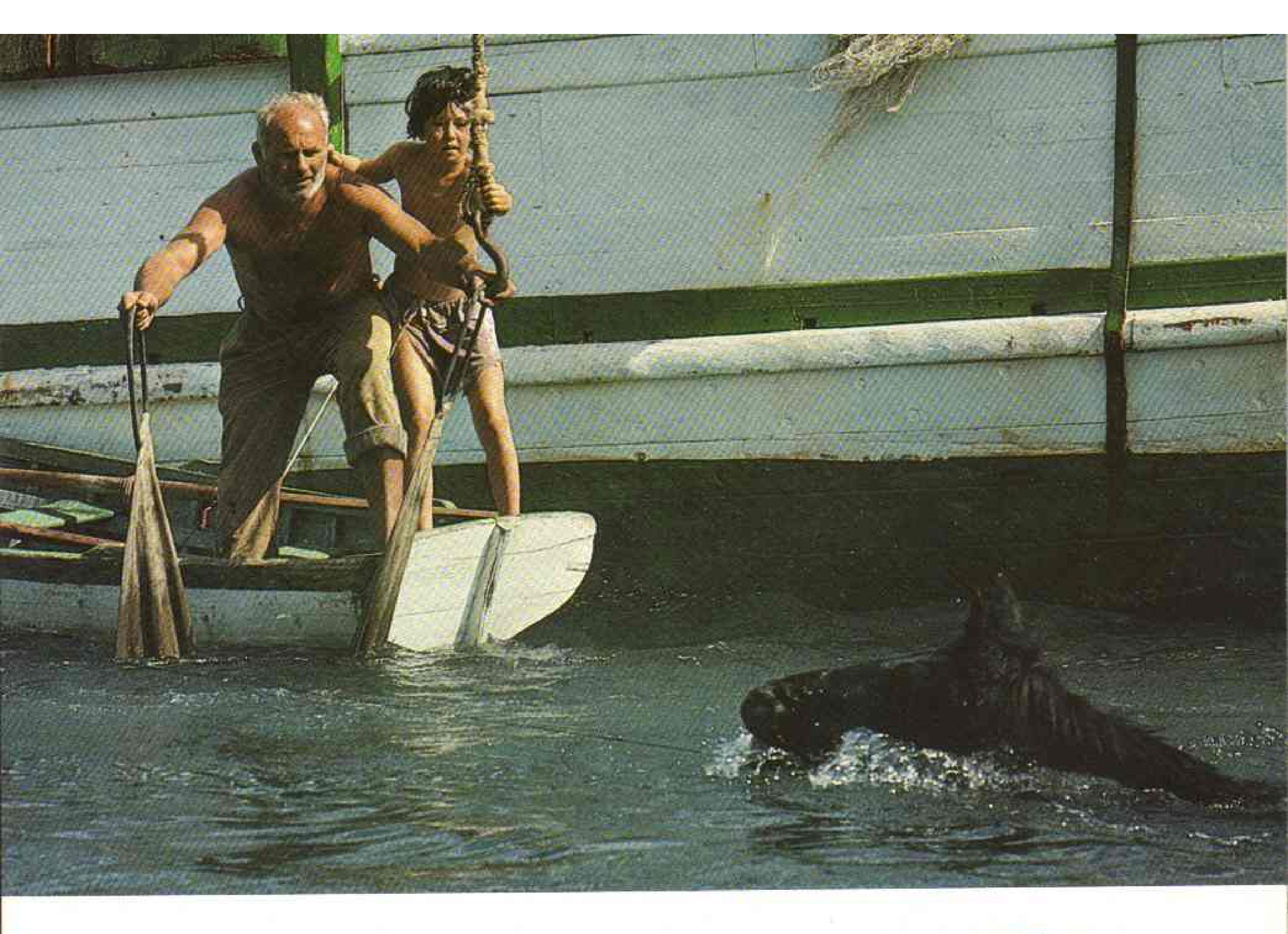
Alec started leaving seaweed for the Stallion to eat, and gradually the wild horse began to trust him. One morning, Alec tried feeding him by holding the seaweed in his hand. "Come on. Come on, Black. I won't hurt you. Come on."

Hesitantly, the towering horse took the leaf from his hand. Alec grinned. They were friends at last!



They had happy days on the island, exploring and playing tag on the beach. And finally a wonderful thing happened. The Stallion let Alec climb on his back. Swift as the wind, they raced across the sand. Alec had never felt such power, such speed! "It's like flying!"





The summer sped by as the two friends romped happily. Then one day a ship appeared in the bay. Alec was rescued!

From the beach the Stallion whinnied and bucked, watching the sailors row Alec out to their ship. Finally, he plunged into the water following the boy he loved.

As the sailors struggled to hoist the nervous horse aboard, Alec smiled. "That's right, Black. We're going home!"

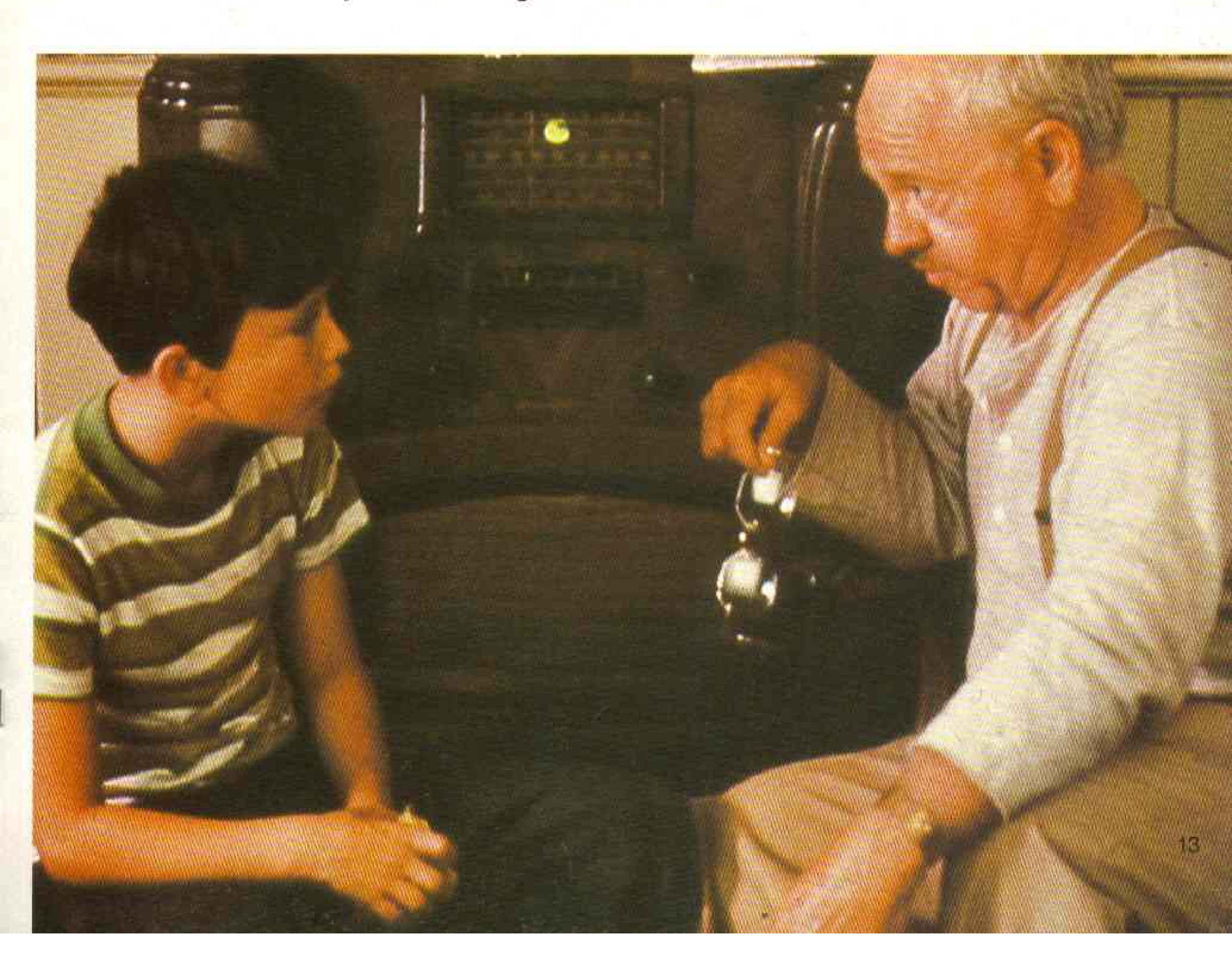


Alec's family was overjoyed to have him home, but they were awfully surprised when he walked off the ship leading the giant Black Stallion. Henry Dailey, a neighbor who was an ex-jockey, made a kind offer to Alec. "Y'know, you could keep your horse in my old barn. I'd like having a horse on the place again."

Henry knew horses, and, after watching the Stallion run, he knew this was a special one. One day he sat Alec down for a talk. "When I was young, I rode some of the fastest horses that ever were. But I never saw one faster than your Black."

Alec's eyes widened. "You think he could be a race horse?"

"I sure do. If you're willing to work for it."



During the weeks that followed, Henry worked long hours with Alec and the Black. They trained every day, in all kinds of weather. Alec worked hard, too, but something still bothered him. "Henry, am I too young to be a jockey? I mean, will they *let* me ride Black in a race?"

"Well, he won't let anyone else on his back, so I just guess they'll *have* to let you ride him!"





Henry shared with Alec all his knowledge of how to ride a horse to victory. "When that bell rings you got to be tight on that horse, y'see? 'Cause that Black will just scat, he'll just be gone and where will you be?"

"Sitting in the dust?"

"Right. Sitting in the dust."



Early one spring morning, Henry pulled up to Alec's house in his truck with the Stallion snorting nervously in the trailer. Henry waved to Alec. "Black's getting too fast for that little field we've been using. Today we run on a real racetrack. Come on!"

They arrived at the track early, so no one else would see them. With room to really run, the Black Stallion tore around the track like a meteor. Alec had to hold tight to keep from falling off.

Even Henry was surprised at the Stallion's speed. "Man, oh, man, I think he could beat any horse in the country. And I've got an idea how to get him into a real race."



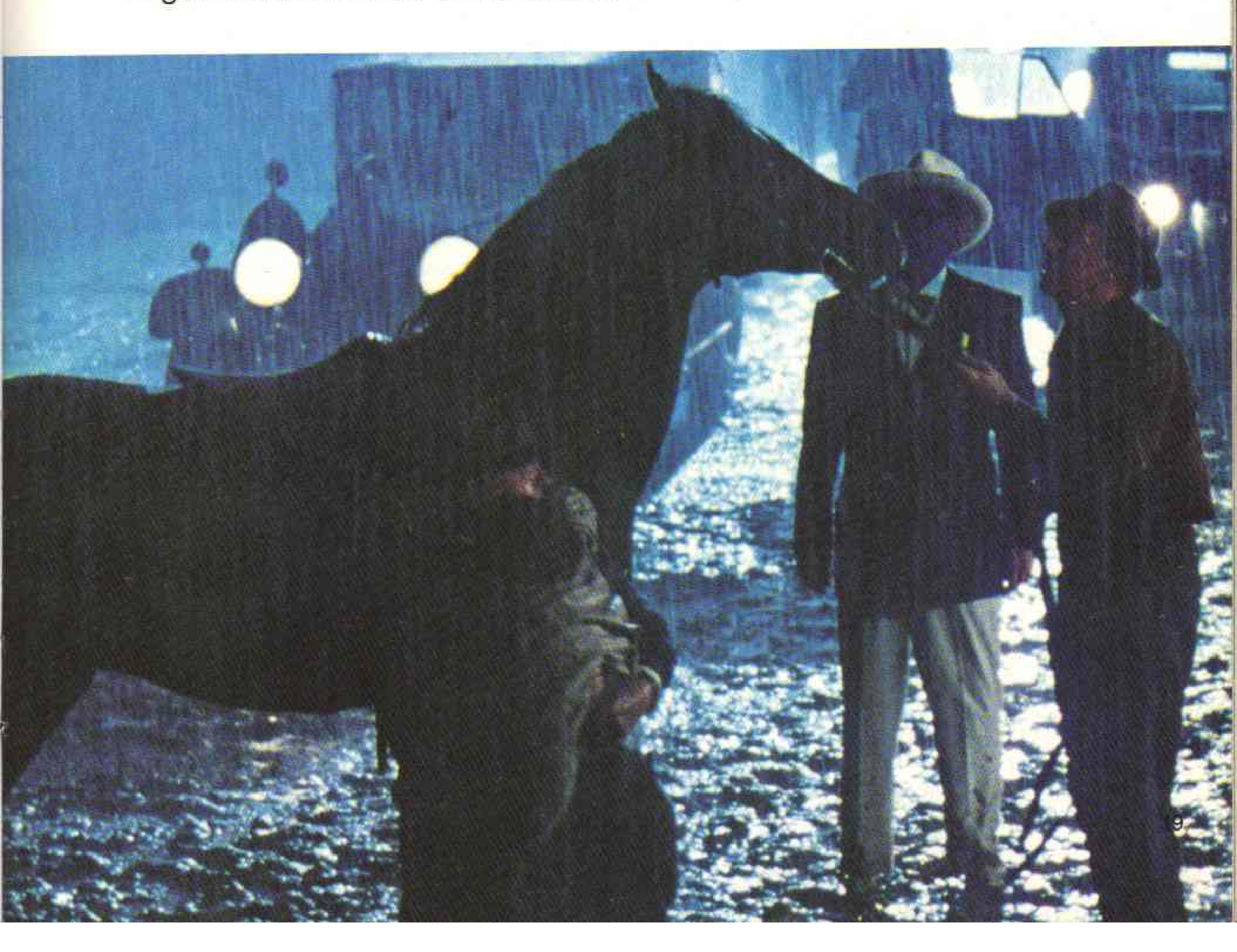


The next time Alec went to the track, it was late at night. A well-dressed man in a fancy car drove up. Henry had asked an old friend, a famous sportswriter, to come watch the Stallion run. "Well, Henry, I hope this 'mystery horse' of yours is everything you claim he is."

Henry winked. "Just keep an eye on your stopwatch. You won't be disappointed."

Alec and the Black began their run. It started to rain and the track became slippery, but even that couldn't slow the Black Stallion! He raced across the finish line.

The sportswriter stared at his stopwatch in amazement! "I've never seen a horse run like that. Henry, I'll not only get him in a race, I'll get him in the race of the decade!"



A few mornings later, Alec blinked in disbelief when he saw the sports page headline—"Mystery Horse To Race Cyclone And Sunraider".

He ran to show his mother. "Mom, Mom, look! The two fastest horses in the country! And Black is the mystery horse! And I'm going to ride him!"



The day of the race, Alec was nervous. "I don't know, Henry—I've never ridden in a race before. And those other horses, they're going to be tough to beat."

Henry gave him an encouraging grin. "They're the fastest in the world, but Black is faster. You just hang on and we're gonna win."





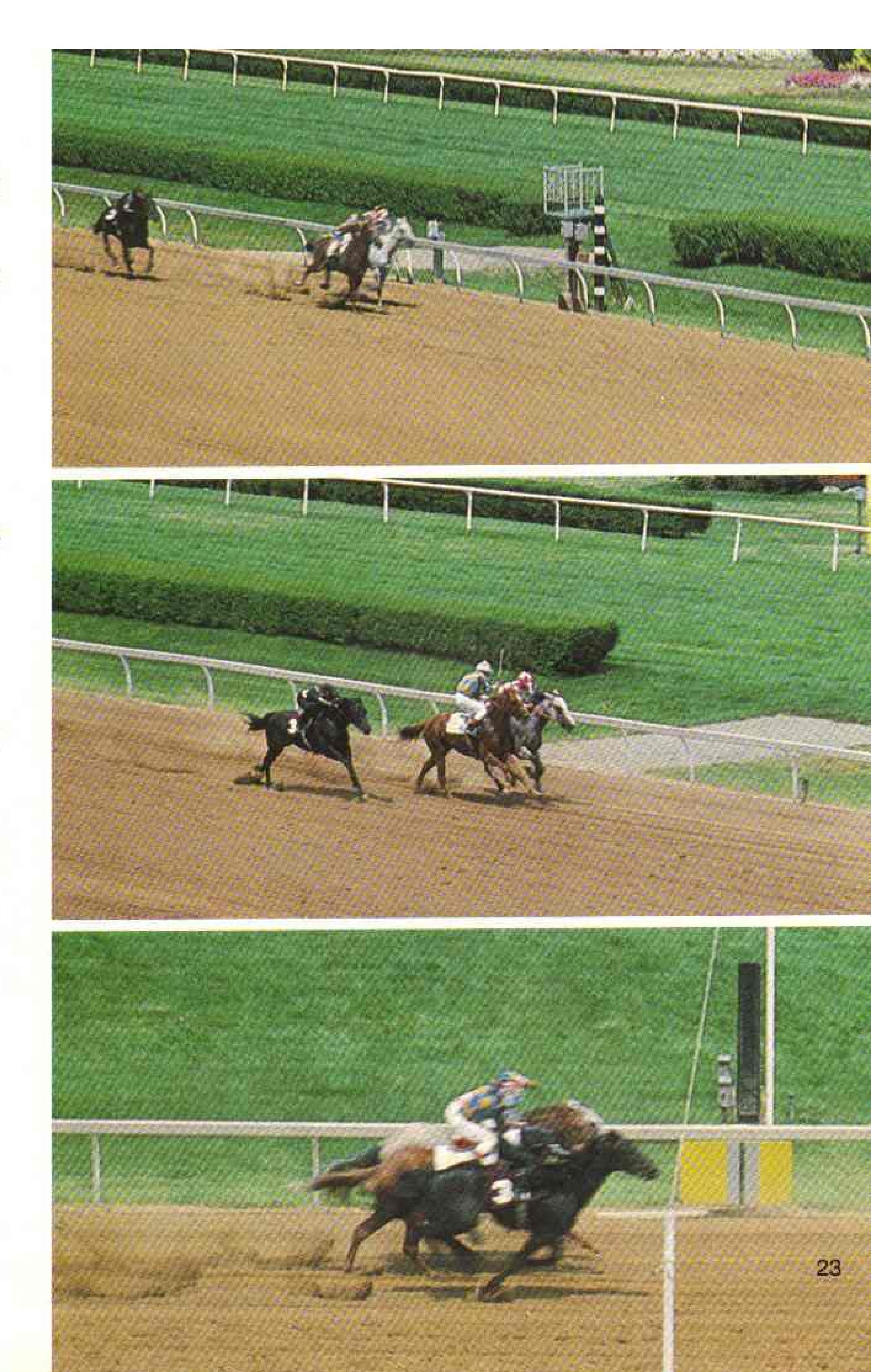
As they walked out to the starting gate, the noise and confusion upset the Stallion. Alec tried to calm him, but Black reared up in the gate, almost throwing the boy. Alec called out, "Stop the race!" But it was too late.

The race was on. The Black Stallion came out of the gate late and unsteady. Winning now seemed hopeless.

By now the other horses were way ahead. Catching up with them seemed impossible, but Alec shouted, "Come on, Black!"

With each stride the great stallion's speed increased. Never had he run so fast, not on the island, not on those nights at the track. Little by little the Black closed the gap.

Then with a mighty burst of speed, he flew by the others and crossed the finish line first! "We won, Black! We won!"





Surrounded by cheering, Black was led to the winner's circle. The noise, the excitement, the crowds were almost too much for Alec. It was wonderful to share his victory with his family and friends. But in truth, Alec just wanted to go home where he and the Black could be alone again, just as it was in the beginning, on the island.

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